News

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NAPOLEON'S MERCY.

Napoleon was conversing with Josephine when one of his officers entered and announced a young woman from Lyons.

'What is her business with me?'

'Some petition,' answered de Merville, the officer.

The officer soon re-appeared with a lady leaning on his arm, whose face, as much as could be scanned through the thick folds of a veil, was very beautiful. She trembled as she approached the door.

'Mademoiselle,' whispered her guide gently, 'take courage, but answer promptly every question the Emperor proposes; he detests hesitation.'

Then urshering her into the spacious apartment, he bowed and retired.

The trembling girl, perceiving Napoleon, on whom her fondest hopes depended, forgot her timidity; she thought only of another. Throwing herself at the feet of Napoleon, she exclaimed in a voice choking with emotion,

'Mercy, sire! I sue for mercy and pardon.'

She could articulate no more.

Josephine stepped from her partial concealment, and then approaching, contributed more by her sympathising words of encouragement to restore the courage of the petitioner than even the Emperor by his gracious manner as he bade her rise.

'Your petition, mademoiselle,' said he.

Henrietta Armond--for that was her name--looked imploringly at the Emperor and exclaimed,

'Ah, sire, I ask pardon for Louis Delmarre, who is condemned to be shot on to-morrow! O, grant him your royal pardon!'

A cloud gathered on Napoleon's brow as he interrupted her with,

'A deserter, mademoiselle: he has twice deserted! No, he must be made an example for the balance of the regiment.'

'But the causes of his desertion!' cried Henrietta in agony. 'He was compelled to join the army against his will.'

'What are the causes of his desertion?' interrupted Napoleon.

'Two weeks since,' answered Henrietta, 'he received news that an only remaining parent, a mother, sire, was on her death-bed, and longed day and night to behold her son. Louis knew that relief or release from his post was impossible. His mind was filled with but one thought--that she might not close her eyes forever, ere they rested on a son she loved so fondly.'

'Did she die?' asked the Empress, with interest.

'No, madam,' replied Henrietta, 'she at last recovered. But hardly had Louis received her blessing, been folded in her arms, ere he was torn from her grasp by the officer of justice and dragged hither. Oh! must he die!--Mercy, sire, I beseech you!'

'Mademoiselle,' said Napoleon, apparently softened, 'this is the second offence; name the first; you omitted that.'

'It was,' said she, hesitating and coloring, 'it was--that he heard I was to be married to Conrad Ferant, whom I detest as much as he does,' answered Henrietta with naivette.

'Are you his sister, that he feels so great an interest in your fate,' asked the Emperor.

'Oh no, sire,' said Henrietta, her lovely cheeks assuming a still deeper hue of the rose, 'I am only his cousin.'

'Ah! only a cousin,' repeated Napoleon, glancing at Josephine with a suppressed smile.

'Oh, sire,' said Henrietta, 'recollect the anguish of his widowed mother when she recollects that the affection of her son for her is the cause of his death. What can I do to save him?' and the poor girl, forgetting the presence of royalty, burst into tears. The kind-hearted Josephine glanced at the Emperor with eyes of pity and sympathy. She noticed the workings of his face, and felt at once that it was very uncertain whether Louis Delmarre was to be shot the next morning.

Napoleon approached the weeping girl. She hastily looked up and dried her tears.

'Mademoiselle,' said he, 'would you give your life for his? Would you die could Louis Delmarre be restored to liberty and his mother?'

Henrietta started back, deadly pale, looked fixedly at the Emperor for a moment, then turning away she buried her face in her hands.

After a silence of some minutes, Henrietta looked up.

'I am willing,' said she, in a very low voice.

Napoleon looked at her in surprise, as if he had not anticipated so ready an answer to his proposal.

'I will see you again,' said he, 'in the meantime accept such apartments for your accommodation as I shall direct.'

As soon as the door was closed upon the fair petitioner. Napoleon walked to the window against which Josephine was leaning and said:

'I see how it is: Louis Delmarre is the lover of this young girl. True to woman's nature, she has braved danger and difficulty to beg his release.'

'How strong must be the love she bears for him,' said the Empress.

'Ah,' returned he, 'I have a mind to subject this love to a severer test. Much I doubt whether she will give her life for him. Nevertheless, I will see.'

'Sure,' cried Josephine, 'you are not serious---Louis can certainly be pardoned without the death of Henrietta.'

Napoleon drew near the window, and they conversed in a low voice.

* * * *

Henrietta stood alone in a magnificent apartment. Hours passed unobserved, so intensely was she absorbed in reverie; a small folded paper was tightly grasped in her small hand. On it were traced these words:

"A deserter is condemned by the laws of the army to suffer death. If you wish Delmarre restored to liberty, the means are in your power. Ere days dawns he may be on his way to join his mother, whom he so much loves.'

'Ah,' murmured Henrietta, 'do not I love him too?'

Pressing her hands upon her heart, as if to still its tumultuous beating, she paced the apartment. The door opened, and Chevalier de Merville entered. He paused ere he articulated,

'Mademoiselle!'

'I am ready,' replied Henrietta, 'my decision is made.'

De Merville appeared to comprehend the import of her words. He looked upon her with reverence as well as admiration, as she stood with high resolve impressed upon her beautiful brow.

'Follow me, mademoiselle,' said he.

They traversed long corridors and numerous suites of superb apartments, and descending a staircase, quickly reached an outer court communicating with the guardhouse. Entering this, Henrietta was ushered by her guide into a small apartment, where she was soon left to herself.

On a chair was flung a uniform of the regiment to which Louis belonged On the table lay a large plumed cap. Henrietta comprehended all in a moment.

Quickly habiting herself in the uniform, she stood before the mirror, and gathering up her beautiful brown tresses to a knot, placed the cap on her head. She almost uttered a cry of joy at the success of her transformation. She knew that she was to be led to the fatal ground at the morning's dawn. The bullet which was to have struck Louis to the heart was to be death to her own, but she shrunk not back. Love triumphed over the timid woman's nature.

'Louis' mother will bless me in her heart,' she whispered. 'Louis himself will never forget me. And often has he sworn that he loved me better than all else beside.'

Drawing a lock of raven hair from her bosom she pressed it to her lips, and then breathed a prayer to heaven.

Morning dawned. The sound of footmen aroused Henrietta. She started up, grasped the band of hair, awaiting the summons. The door opened and two soldiers entered repeating the name of Louis Delmarre; they suddenly led her forth to die. The soldiers whose bullets were to pierce the heart of Louis had taken their stand and only awaited the command from the Emperor, who was stationed at the window, commanding a view of the whole scene.

'Oh,' cried Josephine, who stood by him, but concealed by the window drapery from the view of those below, 'Oh, sire, I can endure it no longer; it seems so much like a dreadful reality. Mark the devoted girl! No shrinking back! See, she seems calmly awaiting the fatal moment.'

'Stop!' cried the Emperor from the window 'Louis Delmarre is pardoned. I revoke his sentence!'

A loud burst of applause from the lips of the soldiers followed this announcement. Not one of them but loved and respected their comrade. The next moment ere they could press around to congratulate the supposed Louis, De Merville had eagerly drawn the bewildered Henrietta through the crowd back to the cell from which she had emerged but a few moments before.

'Resume your dress, again Mademoiselle; lose no time, the Emperor wishes to see you. I will return to you soon.'

Henrietta was like one in a dream, but a gleam of delicious hope thrilled her soul; she felt the dawning of happiness break upon her heart. Soon again resuming her pretty rustic habiliments De Merville re-appeared, and once again she trod the audience room of the Emperor. Lifting her eyes from the ground as the lofty door swung open, she beheld Louis. An exclamation of joy burst from the lips of both, as, regardless of others, they rushed into each others arms.

Napoleon stepped forward.

'Louis Delmarre,' said he, 'you have just heard from my lips the tale of this lovely girl's devotion and courage.—Do you love her as she deserves!'

'I could die for her, answered Louis proudly.

'Well, well,' cried the Emperor, 'this test of one will suffice. So dutiful a son, so faithful a lover, will doubtless make the best of husbands. You, Lieutenant Delmarre, are discharged from your regiment. Return to your native valley with Henrietta as your bride.'

'Here,' said the benevolent Josephine, emerging from the recessed window, 'here are one hundred louis d'ors, as the marriage dowry, Henrietta.

A charming blush suffused the cheek of the beautiful girl as she received the purse from the hand of the Empress.

'Long live Napoleon!' exclaimed Louis, as with a heart too full of grateful emotion for further utterance he took the hand of Henrietta, and making a graceful obesiance, quitted the apartment.

A man who dislikes broom handles and shovels should be careful how he squirts tobacco juice on a red-headed woman's carpet.

At the burning of the John Jay on Lake George, there were no ladies drowned who wore hooped skirts, as the skirts filled with air, and prevented the wearers from sigking until assistance was afforded. This is a well authenticated fact.

MEMORY.

Wandering on the shores of mem'ry,
Gathering up the fragments, cast
By the surging waves of feeling,
From the ocean of the past.
Here a shell, and there a pebble,
With its edges worn away
By the rolling of the waters—
By the dashing of the spray.

Some lie smooth, and many tinted,
High upon the glistening sand;
Others, sharp and freshly scattered,
Wound when taken in the hand.
Here are wrecks of by-gone treasures,
Garnered in our early years;
Gathered now in hidden caverns,
Crusted with the salt of tears.

Every hope and every sorrow
That the heart has ever known;
Vessels launched in youth's bright hour,
On this shadowy beach are thrown.
Here are pleasure-boats, that glided
O'er smooth waters for awhile:
There rich argosies of feeling,
Freighted with a kiss or smile.

Joy that vanished, e'er 'twas tasted,
Is but sea-weed wet with spray;
Eagerly we seek to grasp it—
Lo! its beauties fade away;
Floating in the distant future
It was dipped with rainbow dyes;
But upon the sands of mem'ry,
Now in tangled masses lies.

Here are wrecks of early friendships,
Living only in the past;
Vessels which were far too fragile
To withstand misfortune's blast.
By them nobler barks are lying—
Barks that weathered every gale,
Till on Death, their life-boats shattered,
They were never known to fail.

Round about are remnants lying,
Of the cargoes which they bore,
And on each these words are graven;
"Friend, we've only gone before."
Oh it gives both pain and pleasure,
To reflect that when we die,
Shattered on the sands of Mem'ry,
We in other hearts will lie!

It is the Last of Earth.

Men seldom think of the great event of death until the shadow falls across their own path, hiding forever from their eyes the traces of the loved ones whose living smiles were the sunlight of their existence. Death is the great antagonist of life, and the cold thought of the tomb is the skeleton of all feasts. We do not want to pass through the dark valley, although its passage may lead to paradise; and, with Charles Lamb, we do not want to lie down in the muddy grave, even with the kings and princes for our bedfellows. But the fiat of nature is inexorable. There is no appeal or relief from the great law which dooms us to dust. We flourish and fade as the leaves of the forest; and the flower that blooms and withers in a day, has not a frailer hold on life than the mightiest monarch that ever shook the earth with his footsteps. Generations of men appear and vanish as the grass, and the countless multitude that throngs to-day will to-morrow disappear as the footprints on the sand shore.

But we shall meet again. The dead only sleep for the resurrection of immortality. In the beautiful drama of Ion, the instinct of immortality so eloquently uttered by the death-devoted Greek, finds a deep response in every thoughtful soul. When about to yield up his young existence as a sacrifice to fate, his beloved Clemanthe asks if they will not meet again, to which he replies:

"I have asked that dreadful question of the hills that look eternal; of the flowing streams that flow forever; of the stars among whose fields of azure my raised spirit hath walked to glory, and all were dumb. But while I gaze upon thy living face, I feel there's something in the love that mantles through its beauty that cannot wholly perish. We shall meet again, Clemanthe!"

"Our Mother" only sleeps. and she who rests beside her is not gone forever!

The earth is filled with learned dust. Greatness and gentleness sleep together. The cherub-faced babe and the infirm old man go down side by side. All of us have friends and kindred gone to the grave.

There is an interest in the dying words of men that does not attach to them while living. They often give a clue to the whole history of the man. They still oftener give a significant intimation as to the state in which the departed expired. Below are the last words of a few of the great ones of the world. There is profit in pondering them:

'Head of the army!'—Napoleon.

'I must sleep now.'—Byron.

'It matters little how the dead lieth.'—Sir Walter Raleigh.

'Kiss me, Hardy.'—Lord Nelson.

'Don't give up the ship.'—Lawrence.

'I'm shot if I don't believe I'm dying.'—Charles Thurlow.

'Is this your fidelity?'—Nero.

'Clasp my hands, my dear friend, I die.'—Alfieri.

'Give Dayrocles a chair.'—Lord Chesterfield.

'God preserve the Emperor.'—Hayden.

'The artery ceases to beat.'—Haller.

'Let the light enter.'—Goethe.

'All my possessions for a moment of time.'—Queen Elizabeth.

'What! is there no bribing death?'—Cardinal Beaufort.

'I loved God, my father and liberty.'—Madame de Stael.

'Be serious.'—Grotious.

'Into thy hands, O Lord.'—Tasso.

'It is small, very small indeed,'—clasping her neck.—Anne Boleyn.

'I pray you see me safe up, and as for my coming down let me shift for myself.' (ascending the scaffold.)—Sir Thomas Moore.

'Don't let that awkward squad fire over my grave.'—Burns.

'I feel as if I were myself again.—Walter Scott.

'I resign myself to God, and my daughter to my country.'—Jefferson.

'It is well.'—Washington.

'It is the last of earth. I am content.'—Adams.

'There is not a drop of blood in my veins.'—Frederic V.

'A dying man can do nothing easy.'—Franklin.

'Let not poor Nelly starve.—Charles II.

Refresh me with a great thought.'—Heyden.

'I feel the daisies growing over me.'—Keats.

'Let me die to the sounds of delicious music.'—Mirabeau.

Daniel Webster uttered the words, 'I still live.'

I once heard a lady say to an individual,

"Your countenance to me is like the rising sun, for it always gladdens me with a cheerful look."

A merry or a cheerful countenance was one of the things which Jeremy Taylor said his enemies and persecutors could not take away from him.

There are some persons who spend their lives as if shut up in a dungeon. Everything is made gloomy and forbidding. They go mourning and complaining from day to day, that they have so little, and are constantly anxious lest what little they have should escape out of their hands. They look always on the dark side of the picture and can never enjoy the good that is present for the evil that is to come. Religion makes the heart cheerful, and when its large and benevolent principles are exercised, man will be happy in spite of himself.

Good and Evil.—The knot of our life is a mingled yarn, good and ill together; our virtues would be proud, if our faults whipped them not: and our crimes would despair, if they were not cherished by our virtues.

It was a proverb among the Greeks that a flatterer who lifts you up to the clouds has the same motive as the eagle when he raires the tortoise in the air; he wishes to gain something by your fall.

THE OCEAN TELEGRAPH.

The action of the New York Board of Alderman tendering the freedom of the city to the officers and crew of the United States steamer Arctic, of the ocean surveying expedition, was a well deserved compliment, for they have fully demonstrated the feasibility of connecting the two continents by a telegraphic wire; and in this circumstance the prospective relations of the largest commercial nations on the globe, are intimately involved. When such facilities exist for ready intercourse as are now contemplated, diplomacy may be more safely relied on as a substitute for the sword, and mercantile transactions will not be liable to those contingences arising from delay and misapprehension, which now so often lead to difficulty. The bed of the ocean was found to vary but slightly from a plane, thus effecting a considerable saving in the length of wire, compared with what might have been reasonably expected. The arrangements for laying the wire is not yet complete, Mr. Field being at present in England wish reference to this matter, but we learn that the telegraphic connection between this port and St. John's, N. F. is very nearly complete. An unexpected delay arose from a miscalculation as to the length of the wire required for going through Nova Scotia, occasioned by inaccurate surveys, so that it was necessary to return to England and procure twenty-five miles additional—making the whole length of atmospheric wire 125 miles. This portion is nearly finished, and the two sub marine cables between St. John's and Prince Edward's Island and across the Gulf of St, Lawrence—one over 25 miles in length and the other 86—are found to be complete and in the best working order. The expenditure on this important enterprise, up to the present time, is betwoen $600,000 and $700,000. The cost of the ocean survey is defrayed by the U. S. Government. We are informed that the Telegraph Company feel under great obligations to Secretary Dobbin, for the valuable co-operation afforded by him in the prosecution of this part of the work.---*N. Y. Journal of Commerce.*

The Origin of the Turkish Crescent.—When Philip of Macedon approached by night with the troops to scale the walls of Byzantium the moon shone out and discovered his design to the beseiged, who repulsed him. The crescent was afterwards adopted as the favorite badge of the city. When the Turks took Byzantium, they found the crescent in every public place, and believing it to possess some magical power, adopted it themselves.

Decrease in Population.—The late census returns, in Ireland, show that the population has decreased three millions during the last ten years. The fact has created much discussion, and the reason of it is sought by English papers in various directions.

No poultice has ever been discovered to draw out man's virtues so fully as the sod that covers his grave.

Old Newspapers.—Many people like Newspapers, but few preserve them; yet the most interesting reading imaginable is a file of old newspapers. It brings up the very age with all its bustle and every day affairs, and marks its genius and its spirit more than the most labored description of the historian. File your papers.

When we see a neat pretty girl, with a free but innocent air, with cheeks like roses, and heavenly blue eyes, which seem to repose in serenity beneath their silken lashes, we always wish she was near a mud puddle and we had to help her over.

A printer out West, whose first son happened to be a very short, fat little fellow, named him Brevier Fullface Jones.